

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application in light of the present amendment and remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants acknowledge with thanks the examiner's indication that claim 13 is allowable.

Claims 1-6, 8-12 and 14-16 have been rejected.

Claim 7 was previously canceled.

Claim 13 has been canceled, without prejudice.

Claim 1 has been amended.

Claims 1-6, 8-12 and 14-16 are pending in this application.

Applicants acknowledge with thanks the Examiner's indication that claim 13 would be allowable if rewritten to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the recitations of claim 13, which is subsequently canceled.

Accordingly, applicants submit that amended claim 1 is now in a condition for allowance.

Claims 1-6 and 15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ahmed et al. (US Publ. 2002/0048333) in view of Zhang (US Pat. 6,369,758), and in view of Ho (US Pat. 5495432) and further in view of Vobach (US Pat. 5193115). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 has been amended into a condition for allowance as detailed above.

Claims 2-6 and 15 are dependent upon amended claim 1, hereby incorporated by reference, and are therefore deemed allowable as well for the same reasons.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 8-12 and 16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ahmed et al. (US Publ. 2002/0048333) in view of Zhang (US Pat. 6,369,758) in view of Ho (US Pat. 5495432) and further in view of Vobach (US Pat. 5193115, and in view of Laroia et al. (US Publ. 2002/0044524). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 8-12 and 16 are dependent upon amended claim 1, hereby incorporated by reference, and are therefore deemed allowable as well for the same reasons.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

The other references of record have been reviewed and applicant's invention is deemed patentably distinct and nonobvious over each taken alone or in combination.

For the foregoing reasons, applicants respectfully request that the above rejections be withdrawn.

Inasmuch as this amendment distinguishes all of the applicants' claims over the prior art references, for the many reasons indicated above, passing of this case is now believed to be in order. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

No amendment made was related to the statutory requirements of patentability unless expressly stated herein. No amendment made was for the purpose of narrowing the scope of any claim, unless applicant has argued herein that such amendment was made to distinguish over a particular reference or combination of references.

In the event that the Examiner deems the present application non-allowable, it is requested that the Examiner telephone the Applicants' attorney at the number indicated below so that the prosecution of the present case may be advanced by the clarification of any continuing rejection or through an Examiner's amendment.

Authorization is hereby given to charge any fees necessitated by actions taken herein to Deposit Account 50-2117.

Respectfully submitted,
Muck et al.

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